sending of a commission too expensive.

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684x

Polygyny defended as the right of the wealthy. Rosenda was tried by the late /Sam'i/, Arcilio. He responded to Arcilio's statement that "Jesus never ordered man to have two wives" by saying that the devil told him to get a second wife. He also pointed out that he was a very rich man and could well afford to maintain two women and that he needed two wives to help him cultivate all of his banana fields. Fifty lashes were ordered, but Rosenda protested and he was only given twenty lashes. Because of the reduction in the number of lashes, he was fined thirty sucres. [It is also said that he threatened to kill one of the officials before being sentenced.] The woman received fifty lashes and that same day was given to a man from Espelio Grande. Later that day, the woman and her new husband were overtaken by Rosenda at San Antonio just a few miles above Punta Venado. Rosenda told the groom that he was the woman's husband, that he had been drunk and had never ordered her sent away. The man from Espelio Grande "was somewhat stupid," and handed her over. That night, Rosenda and his wife slipped down the river past

[556]

[696]

father, and they argued. Roberto claimed that he needed two wives, and, being a rich hombre, he could afford them. Furthermore, the second wife could supply him with children. Romulo's father replied that Roberto should know well what he was doing in his own heart, and after death, Jesus would punish him.

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[556].

The case materials so far presented indicate that the polygynists and would-be polygynists have been wealthy and powerful dissidents. The following case of Segundo Añapa is a contrary instance that portends of major changes to come.

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[178]

Poor man attempts polygyny. Julio Tapullo who lived a short distance below Tapullo Grande had a crippled left arm. His wife, María Cimarrón, deserted him for another man named Segundo Añapa. Segundo who lived near Playa Grande on the Río Cayapas was already married to Petrona Cimarrón who was not related to María. Despite the objections of his first wife, he and María lived together for over a month. A 'niece' of Petrona met Aurelio who is one of the /[illegible]tala/ from the Río Camarones; she met him when he was bringing in bananas for sale directly to the boat at San Antonio.

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[694]

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Segundo did not reply. In the crowd the murmur went around, "por gusto," for pleasure. [Best translated here as, "for the hell of it."] They both received two hundred and fifty lashes, and as a Cayapa woman does not live by plantain alone, Gabriel advised Julio to spend more money on his wife.

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178

Again it is seen that Cayapa women are capable of direct action, but much more important, a case of polygyny had been successfully legally quashed. Compare, however, the severity of the sentence with that of Segundo: two hundred and fifty lashes versus twenty, plus a thirty sucre fine. Cayapa law can handle the "little man." It is almost as if polygyny were becoming quasi-respectable. Gabriel implied that Segundo had no need for another wife, since he had children. The lack of follow-up action directed against the rich and powerful and the severe quashing that Segundo received may signal the formation of a class-structured society wherein polygyny is legally restricted to the wealthy. In any event, the chief in discussing with me all of the on-going cases of polygyny presented above denied his responsibility. He said that even though all of them were living in sin, everything was actually

4:Altschuler E-S (1959-1960) 1968
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all right because these cases had been "settled" previously by the late /Earl/ Arville.

The omnipresent theme seems to be that a truly determined wrong-doer cannot be handled within the legal framework, and his punishment is shifted to the realm of the supernatural. This results in a de facto acceptance of the illegal act that may be very productive of greater change ultimately leading to de jure acceptance in terms of legal decisions.